Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management - Utah

2009 Utah State Aviation Plan

A COMMITMENT TO AVIATION SAFETY

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1

1.0 General

1.1 PURPOSE

This plan sets forth policy, procedures and guidance to implement the Aviation Management Program for Utah BLM. The purpose is to clarify and standardize aviation management procedures and operations for all employees in the Utah State Office, Utah Districts and Field Offices and all cooperating agencies.

1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The BLM Utah Aviation Program provides for safe and efficient aviation services to meet land management objectives. Utilization of technology, sound aviation management practices and highly trained/motivated personnel will reduce risk, loss, waste and expenditures.

1.3 BLM UTAH AVIATION PHILOSOPHY

The highest priority in any aviation activity will be personal safety. Our goal is risk reduction, proactive hazard identification and accident prevention. The complex nature of the BLM aviation program, combined with the demanding flight environment of rough terrain and high density altitudes of Utah, requires the guidance of a philosophy reflecting the basic tenets of safety. Our goal is to provide safe and efficient aviation support for the BLM mission, while conducting our actions in accordance with this philosophical and regulatory guidance.

An active and aggressive accident prevention program intended to protect our most precious assets - the people utilizing our services.

We must be proactive in safety management.

Risk Management will remain incorporated into all aviation operations.

Managers are responsible for all aircraft missions.

Aviation provides a service for the customer.

There must be planning for flight operations to include: safety, risk management, supervision, organization, and evaluation.

Aviation personnel will be qualified and appropriately trained to standards.

Aviation personnel will be provided emphasis and consideration for individual development, employee wellness and workforce diversity.

The aviation organization will be maintained at the most efficient level commensurate with the BLM mission.

Management has the responsibility to maintain the commitment to aviation safety and efficiency.

District Offices are empowered to accomplish their mission without undue restriction, regulation, or oversight.

State and District Office's local policy and procedure can not be less restrictive, different, or conflict with National Aviation Office (NAO) policy.

1.4 AUTHORITY

This plan is a supplement to the BLM 9400 Manual. As such, it conforms to all Bureau and Departmental aviation policy.

1.5 REFERENCES

A. Title 14 CFR

B. Departmental Manual, Parts 112, 350-354

C. OAS Operational Procedures Memoranda (OPMS)

D. BLM Manual Sections 1112, 1221, 1243, 1244, 1525, 9111, 210, 9400-9470

E. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-76, A-123, A-126

F. GSA Federal Property Management Regulation (FPMR) 101-37

G. Interagency Aviation Operational Guides

H. BLM National Aviation Plan

I. Field Reference Guide for Aviation Security for Airport or other Aviation Facilities (AAF)

Chapter

2

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 AVIATION MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (AMD)

Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) is responsible for all Department of Interior aviation policy and performs aircraft contracting, technical inspections, procurement, and payment administration. AMD also provides contracting officers (CO), technical specialists, training specialists, and financial reports and services to DOI agencies.

2.2 BLM NATIONAL AVIATION OFFICE (NAO)

The National Aviation Program Manager is responsible for BLM aviation policy and leadership of the BLM Aviation Program.

2.3 STATE DIRECTOR (SD)

The State Director is responsible for the following:

1. Disseminate Departmental aviation safety policy and information.

2. Participate in Departmental aviation safety award program.

3. Ensure adequate aviation management staff in partnership with the NAO

4. Operate and maintain aircraft for maximum safety and efficiency.

5. Assign a liaison for Bureau aircraft incident/accident investigations.

6. Monitor Bureau airspace needs.

7. Promote use of SAFECOM system.

8. Identify and submit program requirements.

9. Ensure compliance with OMB circular A-126.

10. Ensure compliance with OMB Circular A-76.

2.4 STATE AVIATION MANAGER (SAM)

The SAM serves as the focal point for BLM aviation management matters in Utah by providing the State Director technical and management expertise regarding the use of aviation resources. The SAM serves as the focal point for state-wide aviation safety and training. The SAM has functional responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Implement aviation program objectives and directives in support of State and District aviation programs.

2. Develop and implement the state-wide Aviation Management Plan, and establish aircraft safety and accident prevention measures.

3. Serve as the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) on all BLM aviation Exclusive Use contracts in the state. Nominates candidates to the Contracting Officer to appoint as Alternate CORs for all BLM Aviation Exclusive Use contracts in Utah. Assigns Project Inspectors to each Exclusive Use contract in Utah.

4. Provide aviation training support to the State Office, District/Field Offices, and other cooperative agencies. Provides statewide statistical analysis and A-126 reporting.

2.5 DISTRICT MANAGERS (DM)

The District Manager has overall responsibility for the District and Field Office(s) Aviation Activities. This responsibility is assigned to the Unit Aviation Manager. In the absence of a Unit Aviation Manager, each office must identify the position responsible for aviation management on the unit.

2.6 UNIT AVIATION MANAGER (UAM)

The Unit Aviation Manager serves as the focal point for the Unit Aviation Program by providing technical and management direction of aviation resources to support Resource and Fire programs. He/She has functional responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Assures all flights comply with USDI/BLM/State and Unit policies and regulations.

2. Develops and implements the Unit Aviation Plan, as well as specific plans for other aviation operations (helicopter operations, Air Tactical, Resource Management, etc)

3. Assures that appropriate training is provided to users and managers.

4. Designates an Alternate Unit Aviation Manager. In the absence of the UAM these duties will default to the designated acting or assistant.

5. Assures that visiting personnel have received flight crew briefing/orientation guides.

6. Confirms DOI/BLM/OMB requirements are met, completes the cost analysis requirements, and ensures flights are scheduled with the appropriate Dispatch Office.

7. Briefs users on flight-following requirements.

8. Ensures the accuracy of the Aircraft Use Report, processes it, and maintains copies, and records documenting the flight as required by the Departmental Manual.

9. Confirms a qualified Chief of Party or appropriate Aircraft Manager is assigned to all project/resource and fire flights.

10. Will perform as Primary Project Inspector or Alternate COR on Exclusive Use and Rental contracts.

11. Prepares a unit statistical analysis of hours flown, costs and aviation production and submits to the SAM.

2.7 AIRCRAFT DISPATCHER

Local Dispatchers trained in aviation operations, policies, and procedures generally fulfill aircraft dispatching duties. Duties include:

1. Confirms that BLM Flight Request Form 9400-1a (Attachment 1) is utilized and completed, and that any Special-Use flight has an attached plan approved by the appropriate authority. *Fire flights are the only ones exempt from the mission-by-mission approval requirement.*

2. When operations cross jurisdictional boundaries, the Dispatcher coordinates with other involved agencies on flight following.

3. Maintains a current Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist (found at: http://amd.nbc.gov/safety/library/iamrp.html) and initiates emergency search-and-rescue procedures for overdue, missing, or aircraft.

4. When flights are incident related, follows the procedures and guidelines established by the Great Basin and National Mobilization Guides.

5. Utilizes required Boundary Plan Checklist (Attachment 2) when dispatching any aircraft into identified hazards.

6. Provides airspace de-confliction.

7. Responsible for procuring rental aircraft (On-Call/CWN) for local administrative, fire, and resource flights; ensuring that DOI/BLM/OMB requirement is met.

8. Dispatches aircraft, provides flight following, and initiates emergency/SAR procedures when necessary. Maintains documentation files on each flight, local aviation vendors, training and qualifications records, pilot flight/duty records, radio logs, etc.

2.8 PILOT

The Pilot is in command of the aircraft and has ultimate responsibility under FAA and Departmental regulations and requirements specified in the contract for the safety of the aircraft and persons on board. Other responsibilities include the following:

1. Operates the aircraft in accordance with applicable FARs and USDI/BLM policy and procedure.

2. Develops, activates, and closes FAA or agency flight plans.

3. Wears personal protective equipment when required.

4. Does not deviate from the filed Flight Plan or mission profile unless prior authorization is received.

5. Performs a thorough pre-flight inspection of the aircraft and briefs all passengers in accordance with 351 DM 1.5.

6. Completes load calculations or weight and balance computations prior to flight.

7. Completes flight invoices for services rendered.

The pilot may terminate a flight at any time for safety reasons.

2.9 AIRCRAFT MANAGER

Aircraft Managers include Resource and Fire Helicopter Managers, Air Tanker Base Managers, Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) Managers, Air Tactical Group Supervisors, Smoke Jumper Spotters, and Detection personnel. Each manager complies with his/her appropriate Interagency Operations Guide and is responsible for the following:

1. Plans, coordinates, and supervises aircraft operations according to DOI/BLM policy.

2. Serves as Alternate COR to administer Exclusive-Use, Call When Needed (CWN), and On-Call aviation contracts in the field.

3. Directs pilots and crews and provides operational and safety briefings to aircrews, project leaders, and passengers.

4. Conducts risk and hazard analysis, completes flight invoices, daily diaries, and all related documentation.

5. Consults with District/Unit or State Aviation Manager when in doubt over any aviation issue.

2.10 FLIGHT MANAGER (FIXED WING AND HELICOPTER)

The Flight Manager is the government representative who ensures compliance with contract requirements and is responsible for coordinating the given flight or project. He/She must have received Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) Flight Manager training in accordance with DOI-AMD OPM 4. (See AMD OPM 4, Aviation User Training Program, Attachment 3) Other duties include:

1. Briefs pilots on missions, frequencies, flight routes, hazards, flight following, passenger briefing requirements, and any other related information required.

2. Checks the pilots' qualification cards and aircraft data cards for approval and currency. Distinguish the difference between Point to Point cards versus Mission Specific Qualification Card.

3. Ensures that flights are safely conducted and do not deviate from filed Flight Plans or Mission Profiles without prior authorization.

4. Initials the flight invoices and routes them according to procedures specified in the contract.

2.11 AIR CREW

Authorized individuals other than the Flight Crew who are essential to the success of the mission, Loadmaster, Helitack, Observer, etc.

2.12 PASSENGER

A passenger is a person aboard an aircraft who does not perform the function of a flight crewmember or air crewmember. Only essential and "official" passengers are authorized on DOI owned/procured aircraft; the government must derive some benefit from the transport of official passengers. Official passengers include:

1. Employees of the Federal Government traveling on official business.

2. Members of Congress and employees of Congressional Committee staffs whose work relates to DOI programs.

3. Non-federal personnel engaged in missions which enhance accomplishment of a departmental program.

Chapter

3

3.0 Administration

3.1 GENERAL

Except for ticketed commercial airline flights, all aircraft acquisition and procurement will be accomplished by designated and qualified Aviation Managers, Logistics Coordinators and Aircraft Dispatchers in their respective Utah coordination centers. Flights on scheduled commercial airlines are initiated through the local office administrative staff and/or travel agency.

3.2 EXCLUSIVE USE AIRCRAFT

Aircraft services identified in the Annual Work Plan (AWP) to be accomplished within a specified timeframe and in excess of $25,000 require a formal aviation contract. Requests for exclusive use contract services require the submission of form AMD-13 and AMD-13A (Airplane) or AMD-13H (Helicopter) and are made to the State Aviation Manager (SAM). Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) will solicit and award the contract and assign a Contracting Officer (CO) and Technical Representative (COTR). The SAM is the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and can delegate field administration of the contract to one or more Alternate COR's or Project Inspectors. See Fire Aircraft Fleet & Contracts (Attachment 4) for Exclusive Use contracts in Utah.

3.3 ON-CALL/CALL WHEN NEEDED CONRACTS

Procurement of aircraft for administrative and aviation projects are typically done through On-Call Contracts. These are used when airlines, contract aircraft, and ground transportation are unavailable, unfeasible, or not cost effective. Requests are made through the local Aviation Manager and or the local dispatching office. *No employee under any circumstances (other then noted in 3.1) may schedule or procure Aviation Services. This is facilitated by Aviation Managers or qualified dispatch office personnel. Any employee who is asked to accompany personnel from another agency on any type of flight must consult with their respective Aviation Officer.* All DOI use of Forest Service Procured Flight Services will be in accordance with OPM-39.

3.4 SERVICE/END PRODUCT CONTRACTS

All Service Contracts or End Product contracts used to acquire a product for the BLM. Contract examples include a service based on a per-head, per-acre, per-unit, or per-area basis. These contracts will be conducted in accordance with OPM 35. *The Field Office Manager and/or State Aviation Manager should be consulted whenever an End Product/Service contract is being contemplated or written that might involve the use of aircraft. End-Product flight activities must be monitored to ensure that Bureau employees are imposing "zero operational control" per OPM 35 and BLM-NAP Sec. 3.7 There is absolutely no flexibility in this area due to the potential implications and liability associated with intentionally or inadvertently imposing operational control when it is inappropriate.*

3.5 COOPERATOR AIRCRAFT

Use of state/local government, military, or other federal agency aircraft by BLM employees may require prior inspection and approval by Aviation Management Directorate (AMD). Proposed flights on these aircraft must be requested and *consultation with the local UAM is mandatory.*

3.6 FLIGHT REQUESTS

For all flights, the user must assure that there is appropriate funding for the mission and that supervisory approval has been granted. (See Flight Request Form, 9400-1a, Attachment 1) For Special Use Flights the project manager *must* complete a Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP). The PASP must be reviewed and approved by appropriate managers.

3.7 COST ANALYSIS

Each flight request for chartered or government-owned aircraft includes an approved cost analysis, which clearly demonstrates the cost effectiveness of the flight. The flight requestor or first-line supervisor coordinates with the Aviation Dispatcher to complete the cost analysis.

3.8 DISTRICT AVIATION PLANS

Districts will prepare an annual aviation operating plan that outlines their specific needs. These plans may not be more restrictive than the national standard, unless the National Aviation Office has been notified in writing. District aviation plans will be updated prior to March 15th, and signed copies sent to the State Aviation Manager for review and filing.

3.9 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Documentation requirements for aviation activities are maintained in their respective field office for a period of two years or duration of contract.

3.10 ISSUE RESOLUTION

Issue resolution is accomplished through the chain of authority established by Utah BLM.

Chapter

4

4.0 Aviation Training Standards

4.0 BLM AVIATION TRAINING

The Department of the Interior's Aviation User's Training Program is a "non-fire" system, distinct from the national Wildland Coordinating Group's (NWCG) Wildland Qualification System (PMS 310-1). Personnel serving NWCG positions need only meet the qualification and currency requirements required in 310-1. In all other instances personnel shall meet the training and currency requirements listed within OPM 04 and the Interagency Aviation Training Guide (available at http://www.iat.gov/docs/iatprogram.pdf).

4.2 AVIATION TRAINING FOR NON-FIRE FLIGHT ACTIVITIES AND POSITIONS

PASSENGER

Any individual aboard an aircraft that does not perform the function of a flight crew/pilot or aircrew member is a passenger. Passengers must receive a briefing by the pilot or an aircrew member for all missions. (See 14 CFR Part 135.117 for additional requirements.)

AIRCREW MEMBER

A person working in and around aircraft and is essential to ensure the safety and successful outcome of the mission is an Air Crewmember. This includes personnel fulfilling the role of Aircraft Manager, such as; Fixed Wing Managers and Helicopter Managers. At a minimum, Air Crewmembers must take:

A-101 Aviation Safety
A-105 Aviation Life Support Equipment
A-106 Aviation Mishap Reporting
A-108 Preflight Checklist &Briefing/Debriefing
A-113 Crash Survival
A-200 Annual Mishap Review

Air Crewmembers are required to take the courses listed above in a classroom for the initial training. Refresher training is required once every three years and can be taken online. Additional training is required to function in higher level Aircrew Member positions such as Fixed Wing Flight Manager and Resource Helicopter Manager. A quick reference for the description of each position and role can be found in the Interagency Aviation Training Guide. For fire aviation positions, the PMS 310-1 Wildland Fire Incident Management system defines the minimum standards for training and experience.

4.3 PERSONNEL WITH AVIATION MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Those individual having management or supervisory oversight responsibilities for programs using aviation resources for mission accomplishment, aviation personnel, flight activities, etc., fit within this broad category requiring selected training.

SUPPERVISORY PERSONNEL

Supervisors are those individuals responsible for employees that use aircraft to accomplish bureau programs. Training for supervisory personnel must include aviation safety, aviation policy, risk management, and supervisory responsibilities. Supervisors are required to take B-3 Basic Aviation Safety. Supervisors can take this course either online or in the classroom. There is no refresher requirement for Supervisors to take B-3 more than once. Supervisors must attend the Aviation Management for Supervisors training course (M-3). BLM supervisors can take the initial course either in a classroom or online. Refresher for M-3 is required once every three years. Supervisors should reference OPM-4 and the Interagency Aviation Training Guide for further information on required training.

LINE MANAGERS

Line managers are those individuals who are responsible and accountable for using aviation resources to accomplish BLM programs. Training for Line Managers must include familiarization with the DOI aviation management program, policies and related requirements and responsibilities. Must attend the Aviation Management Training for Supervisors (M-3) training course or attend a DOI Aviation Management Line Managers Briefing (M-2) course once every three years.

AVIATION MANAGERS AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL

This includes personnel who plan, organize, direct, control, oversee, or administer aviation or aviation safety programs within the BLM. The training requirements for Aviation Mangers can be found in OPM-4, Appendix 1. An in-depth description of each position and role can be found in the Interagency Aviation Use and Management Qualifications Guide.

AVIATION CONTRACTING RESPONSIBILITIES COR/COTR

Contracting Officers Representatives (COR), Alternate Contracting Officers Representatives (ACOR), Technical Representatives (COTR) are designated by the DOI AM Contracting Officer (CO) to monitor aviation services contract performance for administrative (COR) and technical (COTR) provisions of the contract.

BLM CORs, COTRs and Alternate CORs on BLM Exclusive Use Contracts are required to have training on DOI aviation policy, basic contract administration, and methods for verifying the work performed upon which payment is based and technical aspects of the contract. Initial and recurrent COR training requirements can be obtained from AMD contracting offices. Additional training requirements for CORs/COTRs and Alternate CORs can be found in OPM-4, Appendix 1.

AIRCRAFT AND PILOT REQUIREMENTS:

The aircraft (351 DM 2) and pilot (351 DM 3) must be currently approved and carded for the specific mission. For Bureau of Land Management pilots training requirements can be found in OPM-22.

Chapter

5

5.0 Operational Policy

5.1 FLIGHT PLANS OPM -2 – ALL FLIGHT OPERATIONS REQUIRE A FLIGHT PLAN

Pilots shall file and operate on:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight plan or
On an International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) flight plan; or
In accordance with a bureau approved flight plan program; or

Flight plans shall be filed prior to take off when possible. Bureau flight plan programs may be used to accommodate specialized bureau missions and must be approved as delegated by the bureau Director. As a minimum, a bureau flight plan program must specify route of flight, estimated time of arrival (ETA), how an aircraft will be tracked during flight, and response procedures should the aircraft experience a mishap or fail to check in.

5.2 FLIGHT FOLLOWING

Flight following is a safety and operational requirement of the Department of the Interior; see DOI Manual 352 DM 1.9G, OPM 02, and the BLM National Aviation Plan.

Flight following is the responsibility of the scheduling office until the flight is terminated or transferred through positive and documented hand-off to an en route or receiving office. Flight following procedures, check-ins and actions will be documented. The pilot in command (PIC) is responsible for executing all flight plans. Deviations from flight plans are allowed only for weather or safety related reasons; the FAA or agency will be informed at the time of deviation. All BLM flights in Utah will be flight followed utilizing one or more of the methods listed below.

Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan filed with FAA, executed with radar and radio transmissions with an FAA facility (point to point, administrative flights).

Visual Flight Rules (VFR) flight plan filed with FAA, executed with radio and/or telephone check-ins to an FAA facility (point to point, administrative flights).

Written agency flight plan utilizing radio check-ins with dispatch centers at 15 minute intervals. Each check-in will state current position, heading and intentions. Any flight will be terminated at the earliest opportunity without clear, positive radio contact.

Note: VFR and agency flight plans must be accompanied by a call to an agency dispatch office immediately prior to departure, and as soon as practical after landing for each leg.

Automated Flight Following (AFF) is an approved method of flight following when conducted according to the previsions outlined in the National Interagency Mobilization Guide, section 24.3.1.

Note: The chosen method of flight following must be documented on either the 9400-1a or the Project Aviation Safety Plan.

It is critical to understand that Bureau regulations regarding overdue aircraft require specific actions. A radio/communications search and documentation *will* begin when an aircraft is 10 minutes *overdue* from a scheduled check-in or an arrival time at a particular destination. Once an aircraft is overdue by one hour, a physical search is to begin.

BLM aircraft operations conducted under VFR flight plans will require Aircraft Dispatcher or other qualified person to be on duty until the aircraft operations are concluded unless other arrangements have been identified in advance. A dispatcher will remain on duty at the destination point until the aircraft has arrived. An agency dispatcher is not required to be on duty if an IFR plan has been filed with FAA.

5.3 OVERDUE/MISSING AIRCRAFT

Aggressive attempts to locate and contact aircraft that are overdue for a radio or telephone check-in or arrival will be made by Dispatch offices if the status and location of that aircraft cannot be determined using AFF. An aircraft is considered **"overdue"** if it cannot be located within 30 minutes of the last radio transmission/position report. When the known fuel duration on board an overdue aircraft has been exceeded, and its status and location has still not been determined, it is then considered **"missing"**. Dispatch will initiate the appropriate search and rescue action according to their Aviation Mishap Response Plan & Checklist. A current Aviation Mishap Response Plan & Checklist must be at each dispatch center or Resource Project base where flight following occurs.

5.4 OPERATIONAL GUIDES AND HANDBOOKS

A multitude of guides and handbooks are available to assist the aviation user. The Departmental Manuals and DOI Aviation Management Operational Procedures Memorandums (OPM) prevail when any other document conflicts or is less restrictive.

5.5 AVIATION REFERENCES

Each District Office and the State Office will maintain a current aviation reference library. At a minimum, each office should have a current copy of:

Departmental Manual, Parts 112, 350-354
FARs/Aeronautical Information Manual
Aviation Management Directorate (AMD), Bureau and Interagency
Operational Guides
State Aviation Management Plan
District Aviation Plan
Aviation Training Materials
Aircraft Identification/Performance Publications
NOAA Sectional Charts
Unit Aerial Hazard Map
Aviation Mishap Plan & Checklist

5.6 AVIATION DOCUMENTATION

Aviation documentation requirements are described in the Aviation Documentation Matrix. (Attachment 10) The importance of accurate, comprehensive flight and administrative records cannot be overemphasized. All documentation should be retained locally for at least two years. Typical files include:

General Use Flight Plans & Documentation
Special Use Flight Plans
Contract/ARA Administration Files
Individual Aviation Training and Qualification Records
Yearly Aviation Statistical Summaries/Reports
Local Aerial Hazard/Helispot/Airstrip Database
Aviation Incident/Accident Files
Aviation Memo/Bulletin/Alert File
Aviation Forms (Aviation Management Directorate (AMD), BLM, etc.)

5.7 AVIATION MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (AMD) HANDBOOKS

Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE), 351 DM 1
Aviation Mishap Notification, Investigation and Reporting Handbook, 352 DM 6
Aviation Fuel Handling Handbook, 351 DM 1
Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials, 350 DM 2
Heliport Installation, 351 DM 1
Aerial Capturing, Eradication and Tagging of Animals, 351 DM 2
Field Reference Guide for Aviation Users

5.8 INTERAGENCY OPERATIONAL GUIDES

Aerial Ignition Guide
ACETA Handbook
Aircraft Identification Guide
Aviation Mishap Response Guide & Checklist
Fireline Handbook
Geographic and National Mobilization Guides
Incident Command System Field Operations Guide
Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide
Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide
Interagency Aerial Supervisor Guide
Interagency Aviation User's Pocket Guide
Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide
Interagency Lead Plane Operations Guide
Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide
Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide
Interagency Smokejumper Pilots Operation Guide
Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations
Wildland Firefighters Frequency Guide
Military Use Handbook (Chapter 70)

5.9 BLM OPERATIONAL GUIDES

BLM National Aviation Plan
BLM State Aviation Plan
BLM Fixed Wing Standard Operations Guide
BLM Wild Horse and Burro Aviation Operations Handbook

Chapter

6

6.0 Safety

6.1 SAFETY STANDARDS

All aviation safety standards and requirements identified in the Federal Aviation Regulations, DM 350-354, Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) OPMs, BLM Manual 9400, National, State and Field Office Aviation Operational Plans must be followed.

6.2 AVIATION REVIEWS

Each Field Office Aviation Program will be reviewed or inspected at least once every two (2) years by the State Aviation Manager once every three (3) years by national/regional review teams. Facilities, staffing, aircraft dispatching, administrative, and operational procedures will be analyzed for compliance with regulations and safety enhancement. Findings and recommendations will be reported to the Field Office Manager and State Director within three months of the review. AMD will review each States Aviation program once every 5 years.

6.3 AVIATION TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

All personnel engaged in aviation activities, from passengers to upper management, will meet training, recurrence and experience requirements commensurate with their assigned aviation responsibilities. (see OPM 04, Interagency Aviation Training Guide or NWCG 310-1)

INSTRUCTION

Aviation training will be conducted by personnel approved as Interagency Aviation Trainers, Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) Training Specialists or other approved aviation instructors. Basic and 200 Level aviation courses may be coordinated and presented by the local unit. Utah BLM Districts should plan accordingly and ensure they can present this training internally. Higher level aviation training will be requested through the State Aviation Office, Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) or NIFC.

DOCUMENTATION

All aviation training sessions presented at the local level will be documented on OAS -106 or similar form and retained in local files. Individual employee training, qualification and experience records will be updated annually and copies will be maintained by the employee and their supervisor.

6.4 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Daylight - All DOI aircraft (except aircraft certified for IFR and with IFR rated pilots) are limited to flight during daylight hours. Refer to the Sunset charts for your specific area.
Weather/Visibility - The pilot must evaluate known and predicted weather conditions prior to flight, avoid thunderstorms and cancel, postpone, or terminate flights when weather or visibility conditions warrant.

Wind - Helicopter operations will cease whenever wind exceeds limitations in the aircraft Operators Flight Manual or the following, whichever is more restrictive:
Low-Level **-** (below 500' AGL)
Type III - 30 knots or max gust spread of 15 knots
Type I & II - 40 knots or max gust spread of 15 knots
High-Level (above 500' AGL)**:**
All types - 50 knot winds

6.5 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

All crew members and passengers must wear the appropriate complement of PPE for Special-Use activities. Requirements are listed in 351 DM 1.7 (E) and outlined in the Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE) Handbook, and IHOG Chapter 9. Any questions concerning the requirements and procedures for obtaining PPE are directed to the local Aviation Manager.

6.6 AVIATION LIFE SUPPORT EQUIPMENT (ALSE)

Project leaders ensure that appropriate and adequate ALSE, including PPE, is aboard the aircraft or worn by the individual. Detailed information is contained in the ALSE Handbook.

6.7 PILOT QUALIFICATIONS

Only well trained, experienced and FAA certified pilots will be utilized in BLM aviation activities. All pilots flying DOI owned, leased, contracted, rented (ARA) or cooperator aircraft will meet requirements set forth in 351 DM 3. Prior to flight a current Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) or Interagency Pilot Qualification Card (Attachment 6 and 7) or Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) Letter of Approval (LOA) shall be displayed indicating that the pilot is certified to fly the particular aircraft and is qualified to perform the specific mission at hand. If the card is not current, pilot is not checked off for the mission or some other problem arises, *the flight will not commence until the local Aviation Manager is notified and the situation remedied.*

6.8 FLIGHT AND DUTY LIMITATIONS

Pilot flight time and duty time limitations are outlined in DM 351 1.9B. Daily and cumulative flight and duty hours will be monitored, tracked, and documented on all DOI fleet, contract and rental pilots. Aircraft managers, pilots and/or dispatchers will maintain flight and duty logs. SAFECOM reports will be completed and forwarded on all flight and duty infractions. During periods of prolonged heavy aircraft use (intense fire activity) flight and duty may be further limited at management discretion.

6.9 COMFORT/REST

Every effort will be made to ensure that pilots on extended standby or prolonged, extensive flying periods are provided comfortable areas to rest and take breaks. This may include adequate shade/air conditioning/heat, toilet facilities, food and water, and an atmosphere free of undue noise, activity, and stress.

6.10 STERILE COCKPIT

Limiting communications and actions within the cockpit to only those required for safe maneuvering and traffic separation. This means communications with dispatch, ground personnel and other aircraft concerning *mission* information is prohibited. Pilots will be afforded the opportunity to maneuver the aircraft safely at all times without undue physical or mental interference. This is especially important during approach/departure and take-off/landings. A sterile cockpit will be maintained within 5 miles radius of controlled and uncontrolled airports. Dispatch centers are not to communicate with air craft in Class B

Airspace when the aircraft is communicating with air traffic control. A sterile cockpit will also be maintained during approach and departures at remote helispots and airstrips for a time period specified by the pilot.

6.11 TRANSPONDER CODE

To the extent possible, all aircraft engaged in tactical fire suppression operations will utilize transponder code 1255 unless otherwise directed by the FAA or other Air Traffic Control Facility.

6.12 AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION

Only aircraft properly equipped, well maintained and FAA/DOI certified will be utilized for BLM aviation missions. All DOI owned, leased, contracted or rented aircraft will be inspected and certified for intended missions under the appropriate CFR/FAR as outlined in 350-354 DM (this includes flights on cooperator aircraft).

6.13 INTERAGENCY AIRCRAFT

Regardless of agency assigned aircraft, i.e. Forest Service or State, both pilot and aircraft must be inspected and approved by either Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) or USFS. While the USFS and the DOI recognize and honor each others cards, the issuance of a card does not ensure a procurement document is in place. The ability to pay an aircraft vendor with the applicable charge code on the appropriate aircraft payment document should be established prior to the flight. BLM employees will not ride on military aircraft without prior special approval.

6.14 POINT-TO-POINT FLIGHT REQUIREMENTS

Point-to-Point flights involve travel from one designated airport or helibase to another without performing mission-type work such as reconnaissance. (Ref. OPM-29) The following requirements apply:

Approved 9400-1a Aircraft Flight Request/Flight Schedule and cost-analysis to determine and document the selection of the best value vendor. The reverse side of the 9400-1a serves as a risk and hazard analysis checklist and verifies that the flight will comply with Bureau policy as planned.

Only DOI-AM carded/approved aircraft and pilots may be utilized (Attachment 6, Pilot Data Card, and Attachment 8, Point-To-Point Aircraft Data Card).

Passengers will be manifested on the 9400-1a and will be briefed by the pilot on safety procedures prior to departure. No additional specialized training (B-3) is required for passengers on point-to-point flights.

An FAA VFR or IFR flight plan is normally filed and activated by the pilot, in lieu of 15 minute flight following radio calls to dispatch. Agency resource tracking is accomplished with a phone call to dispatch by the flight manager at each refueling stop and upon arrival at the destination.

A Flight Manager will be designated as the point of contact for the administrative oversight of the flight.

Only essential/authorized passengers are allowed on board.

6.15 ADMINISTRATIVE FLIGHTS

Aircraft may be used to transport personnel to meetings, administrative activities, or training sessions when it is the most cost effective mode of transportation. These flights are ordered through the Aviation Dispatcher or local Aviation Manager. Prior approval is required by the solicitors' office for Senior Executive Branch Officials, Senior Federal Officials, members of families of Senior Executive Branch and Senior Federal Officials, and all non-federal travelers on the flight. The requirements and procedures are outlined in OMB Circular A-126 and OPM 07. Request for SES Flights *will be* submitted at least ten working days prior to the flight. This will allow Aircraft Dispatchers and the Solicitors office enough time to perform cost

analysis, review and Approval/Disapproval of the flight (Attachment 9, Form OAS-110, Travel Cost Analysis)

6.16 SPECIAL USE (MISSION) FLIGHTS

Special Use flights are defined as all flights other than point-to-point flights. The purpose of these flights is to accomplish any resource management-related task (i.e. aerial survey or observation) which requires special techniques, procedures and considerations (See 351DM1.7, OPM-29, BLM National Aviation Plan; chapter 6). Special pilot qualifications and techniques, special aircraft equipment, and personal protective equipment are required to minimize risk to personnel and property. DOI aircraft utilized for Special Use missions must have a current Aircraft Data Card (Attachment 6 or 7) onboard issued by Aviation Management Directorate (AMD). This card certifies that the aircraft has been inspected and approved by Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) and meets all FAA and agency equipment and maintenance requirements. Approvals for the specific intended mission must be indicated. If the aircraft doesn't have a card, the card has expired or is not approved for the intended mission *no flight will occur.*
These activities include:

Low level flight (within 500' of the surface)	Smoke jumping/para-cargo
Resource reconnaissance	Mountain flying
Air tactical group supervision	Fire reconnaissance
Cargo letdown	Toe-in, single-skid
External load ≤50' (helicopter)	Rappel
External load - Longline >50' (helicopter)	Short-haul
Water landings - floats or hull	Animal darting, paint ball
Wheel operations on unprepared landing areas	
Offshore platform landings	Animal gathering and capture
Animal eradication	Handheld net gun
Airframe mounted net gun (helicopter)	Night vision goggles
Aerial ignition	Water/retardant application

Note: *Be advised that OPM-29 introduces an additional category of flight called "High Reconnaissance" that lies somewhere between "Point-to Point" and "Special Use," which is based on subtle differences in how an aircraft is maneuvered. To conform to Chapter 6 of the National Aviation Plan, Utah BLM will categorize all flights into only two categories: Point to Point and Special Use. Essentially all fixed-wing reconnaissance work performed above 500 ft. AGL is either "Fire Reconnaissance," "Resource Reconnaissance," or Precision Reconnaissance" as defined in OPM-29, and will be managed accordingly as Special Use.*

6.17 PROJECT AVIATION MANAGEMENT (NON-FIRE MISSIONS)

A Project Aviation Safety Plan (Attachment 5) will be developed to identify hazards and mitigate risks for projects involving aviation. Wildland fire flights are exempt provided a pre-approved plan is in place, such as Initial Attack Plans, Incident Action Plans, etc. Every plan will be reviewed by the State Aviation Manager . Each plan will be approved by the Field Office Manager or State Director. The reverse side of a 9400-1a may be used for one-time, non-complex flights. These also need to be reviewed by the SAM and approved by the Field Office Manager or State Director. Required elements of a PASP include:

Supervision
Project Name/Objectives
Justification
Project Date

Location
Projected cost of aviation resources
Aircraft
Pilot
Participants
Flight Following and emergency search and rescue
Aerial hazard identification/Risk assessment
Personal Protective clothing/equipment
Load calculations and weight and balance information
Airspace Coordination
Unimproved landing Sites
Standard Operating Procedures
Pre-work meeting/Pre-operational safety briefing
Signatures

A good resource for aviation project planning can be found in the IHOG Chapter 3. Personnel needing assistance with plan requirements, content or examples should contact their Unit Aviation Manager.

6.18 AVIATION INCIDENT/ACCIDENT RESPONSE PLANS

All District Dispatch Centers ***will*** develop and maintain current Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide & Checklist (found at: http://amd.nbc.gov/safety/library/iamrp.html) for their area of responsibility. Plans will include clear procedures to follow before and after aircraft accidents occur; listing of necessary local, state, and national emergency and agency aviation safety contacts.

6.19 MISHAP REPORTING

All aviation mishaps, hazards, maintenance deficiency, incidents, or accidents will be reported according to 352 DM 1 & 6 and the Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) Aviation Mishap Notification, Investigation, Reporting Handbook.

Aircraft Accident/Incidents with Serious Potential

Reported immediately to National Transportation and Safety Board (NTSB) and Aviation Management Directorate (AMD). Make required agency Notifications outlined in unit Incident/Accident Response Plan. NTSB/DOI-Aviation Management will conduct an investigation.

Aircraft Incidents

All mishaps/hazards other than described above should be documented on a SAFECOM, Form OAS-34 (Attachment 10). Send copies to Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) Safety and the State Aviation Manager. Follow-up investigation by the Field Office Aviation Manger is discretionary. Follow-up by State Aviation Manager may be requested.

Chapter

7

7.0 Flight Operations

7.0 FLIGHT OPERATIONS

Except where exempted, all aircraft operations will be carried out in compliance with Department, Bureau and FAA regulations. All employees involved in aircraft operations will be trained and fully qualified in their assigned position. The appropriate handbooks, guides, preferred technical and operational procedures should be reviewed and utilized prior to a specific aviation operation or project.

7.1 AIRTANKER OPERATIONS

Airtanker dispatch, ordering, and operations are conducted according to Great Basin and National Mobilization Guides. The Airtanker Base Manager supervises ground operations in accordance with the Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide.

7.2 SINGLE ENGINE AIR TANKER OPERATIONS

Single Engine Air Tanker operations will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide. The SEAT Base Manager will supervise ground operations in accordance with the Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide.

7.3 AERIAL SUPERVISION OPERATIONS

All Leadplane, Aerial Supervision Module (ASM), and Air Tactical operations will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide.

7.4 HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

Helicopter operations, both fire and resource, will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide, Aerial Ignition Guide, and Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide.

7.5 AERIAL IGNITION OPERATIONS

Aerial ignition operations and projects will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.

7.6 TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Any transportation of hazardous material will be conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook (350 DM 2).

7.7 LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

BLM Law Enforcement personnel often cooperate with other law enforcement agencies in their mission. This sometimes involves the use of State, local, military, and other federal aircraft. Use of Cooperator Aircraft for law enforcement missions is authorized only when specific Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and/or Letters of Approval (LOA) between the cooperating agencies and Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) are in place. Check with local aviation management to ensure that planned activities are covered by existing MOU's/LOA's.

7.8 WILD HORSE & BURRO OPERATIONS

All Wild Horse & Burro Operations will be conducted in compliance with the BLM Wild Horse & Burro Aviation Management Handbook.

7.9 AERIAL CAPTURE, ERADICATION, AND TAGGING OF ANIMALS (ACETA)

All aerial capture, eradication, and tagging of animals will be conducted in compliance with the DOI Aerial Capture, Eradication, and Tagging of Animals Handbook.

7.10 HELICOPTER CARGO LETDOWN

All Helicopter Cargo Letdown Operations will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide and BLM Cargo Letdown Protocol.

Chapter

8

8.0 Airspace Coordination

8.1 INTERAGENCY AIRSPACE COORDINATION

In order to promote safe, consistent and standardized approaches to airspace coordination, the procedures outlined in the Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide will be utilized. Dispatch is responsible for advising pilots when multiple aircraft are enroute to or sharing the same general area of airspace (if incident aerial supervision is not in place to fulfill this role) and for notification of neighboring dispatch centers (per boundary airspace management plans) when flight activity is occurring within five miles of a dispatch area boundary. Dispatch is also responsible for making the necessary notification calls to attempt the de-confliction of Military Training Routes (MTRs) and Special Use Airspace, forwarding requests for Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) to the appropriate FAA facility and disseminating NOTAMs issued by FAA Flight Service Stations. Dispatch efforts in airspace coordination do not replace or supersede the requirement for pilots to obtain complete information from the FAA about the airspace in which they intend to fly, and any current NOTAMs that have been issued. Likewise, pilots must still communicate positions, altitudes, headings, and intentions with each other, and employ "see and avoid" tactics at all times. Situational awareness, active listening skills and timely, accurate communication by *ALL* are the keys to successful traffic separation and airspace coordination.

8.2 BOUNDARY AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT

Each dispatch center in Utah is required (per the BLM National Aviation Plan) to develop and implement a boundary airspace management plan and checklist/procedure (Attachment 2) for notifying neighboring dispatch centers whenever there is aviation activity occurring within five miles of a dispatch area boundary. Aerial operations on, or adjacent to agency/cooperator boundaries, and areas where a neighboring agency/cooperator provides fire suppression (mutual aid, shared or exchanged initial attack areas or zones) require increased management and coordination. The situation we seek to avoid is having two or more agencies/cooperators conducting simultaneous uncoordinated aviation operations within these areas, which would unknowingly put the responding aerial resources within close proximity to one another, placing aircraft and crews at risk. The purpose of this plan is to identify such boundaries and IA zones and provide means of communication, coordination, and airspace de-confliction within those areas.

Boundary Airspace Management Guidelines and Procedures

A ten mile wide neutral air corridor will center on agency/cooperator boundaries. The corridor for mutual or exchanged initial attack areas or zones will encompass the whole zone plus five miles outside the zones boundaries.

Any agency conducting aerial operations within a boundary corridor or near a zone boundary, will immediately notify the adjoining agency/cooperator of such operations. This is accomplished to and from dispatch centers prior to commencing air operations and when operations cease. Examples of aerial operations include reconnaissance, fire suppression missions, special use aviation projects, resource management flights, etc.

Agency aircraft will establish contact on the assigned air-to-air frequency. If contact cannot be established on the designated air-to-air frequency, pilots may attempt initial contact on Air Guard (168.625 MHz). This frequency will be designated for initial call-up and coordination between converging aircraft within corridors and boundary zones only when contact is not otherwise possible. This frequency is programmed as a default receive frequency in all agency and contract aircraft FM radios and is intended for initial contact and emergency purposes only. It is imperative that this frequency is not utilized for tactical or logistical purposes. If Air Guard is used to establish initial contact, aircraft are expected to switch to an alternate frequency.

Chapter

9

9.0 Aviation Facilities

9.1 OPERATIONAL BASES

Operational bases are facilities that are permanent installations and are used on a continuous or seasonal basis for aviation operations, including heliports, retardant bases, and airport facilities. These include aviation facilities on BLM property and facilities on non-BLM land where BLM has primary responsibility for operations, maintenance, and oversight.

9.1.1 CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

The size and extent of aviation installations are commensurate with the expected aircraft use at any given site. Design criteria provide for operational safety as well as adequate work/rest environment for aircrew and personnel assigned. Facilities are constructed and maintained according to BLM Manual 9400 and 9111. District and Field Offices are responsible for the safety and security of personnel and equipment, purchase/lease, construction, maintenance, and utilities relating to aviation facilities.

9.1.2 SAFETY

State Office Divisions, District and Field Offices, and Fire Management Zones shall ensure that Aviation facilities comply with safety regulations outlined in Departmental manuals, guides, handbooks, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). Building, equipment, and landing surfaces will be inspected by local Aviation Managers annually to identify maintenance or safety deficiencies. Modifications and repairs are made prior to the operational season. The State Aviation Manager inspects aviation facilities at least once every two years.

9.2 TEMPORARY BASES

Temporary bases are sites used on a temporary or intermittent basis. (i.e., heli-spots and remote airstrips) Sites not located on BLM land must be pre-approved by the land owner and appropriate BLM management. Each site should be cataloged as to location, description, local hazards, use procedures, agreements, and contacts. Inspections and maintenance are completed as necessary to meet agency safety standards.

9.3 ZONE/FIELD OFFICE SOP'S

Each Fire Management Zone and Field Office with management responsibility for an Aviation facility will produce a SOP that addresses the day-to-day operational procedures, security, and safety practices. This document should be updated each year and kept on site and be clearly accessible to all personnel and contractors.

Chapter

10

10.0 Aviation Security

10.1 AVIATION SECURITY

The policies and procedures in this chapter are intended to make the theft of BLM aircraft more difficult and time consuming and therefore an unattractive target to potential criminals. Aviation Airport Facility (AAF) means any DOI owned or controlled real property that has been developed or improved for aircraft (landing and takeoff) at which DOI owned or controlled aircraft are regularly or intermittently based.

FACICILITIES

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FACILITIES

A risk assessment has been completed by the BLM National Office for Aviation Airport Facilities in Utah. An AAF threat score for all Utah facilities of less than 15 was determined by using the (AAF) Airport Characteristics Measurement Tool (page five DOI Field Reference Guide for Aviation Security for Airport or other Aviation Facilities). With a score of less than 15, it is required that each facility fill out a contact list, found in Section 2 of the above mentioned Guide.

SECURITY OF AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT

At any time DOI owned or controlled aircraft are not directly attended by Department authorized flight or ground personnel, the aircraft will be physically secured and disabled via the dual-lock method. The dual-lock method consists of any combination of anti-theft devices on or within the aircraft, devices designed to lock aircraft flight control surfaces when not in use, or lockable devices designed to secure an aircraft to the ground. For contract aircraft security responsibilities, please reference individual contracts. Locking devices and methods must be installed in a manger that precludes their inadvertent interference with in-flight operations.

ATTACHMENTS

Cited attachments should be procured from you local Unit Aviation Manager